

Approved: December 9, 2024

TOWN OF WINCHENDON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, November 12, 2024-6:30pm
Town Hall, 2nd Floor Auditorium, 109 Front Street, Winchendon, Mass.

Present: Rick Ward, Chair
Andrew Beauvais, Vice Chair
Melissa Blanchard

William McKinney, Town Manager
Debra Dennis, Executive Assistant

Absent: Audrey LaBrie and Erika Eitland

List of Documents Presented at Meeting:

- Letter of Resignation-Jill Sackett-Master Plan Implementation Committee
- Updated Vacancy List of Boards/Committees
- Application: Change in Manager-American Legion Post 193-Kathleen Blacquiere
- Application: Special One Day Liquor License-WCAC-Murder Mystery Dinner at the Senior Center November 23, 2024
- Application: Special One Day Liquor License-WCAC-Snowball Dinner at the Senior Center December 14, 2024
- Application-Common Victualer-WCAC 5 Summer Drive
- Draft List of Robinson Broadhurst Grant-Requests
- Town Manager's Financial Update as of 11/12/2024
- Draft Meeting Minutes-October 28, 2024

6:30 PM Chair Ward called the meeting to order at 6:30P.M. All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Ward asked if anyone would be audio or video recording this meeting tonight to which there was no response heard.

1. **SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Selectwoman Blanchard thanked Brian Croteau for all the work being done at the park. Chair Ward thanked Wendy Stevens, Town Clerk, Debra Skinner, Assistant Town Clerk, Dr. Maureen Ward, Election Warden and all the poll workers. The election ran smoothly and professionally. He thanked Bill McKinney, Town Manager for meeting residents on Election Day and also helping co-workers later that day. He thanked all who took part Veterans Day ceremony at the Legion Hall. He expressed he would like to see more people in attendance next year.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS: Inanna Arthen came forward and she is here to present an award that she was invited to accept on behalf of the people of Winchendon. She said at the annual meeting on October 20, Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust presented an award to the people and Town of Winchendon in appreciation for their support for conserving a 1,365 acre parcel of land in northeast Winchendon and Ashburnham. The land had belonged to the Beals family, and in recent years was managed by Winchendon Forest LLC under a Chapter 61 tax reduction. Solar firm Longroad Energy offered to purchase the land for development of a very

large solar project. Chapter 61 requires that the town be given right of first refusal on sale of the land for non-forestry purposes, and this right can be conveyed to a conservation group that matches the purchase price. At a hearing on December 14, 2023, citizens crammed Town Hall to the rafters to speak in favor of conserving the land. The Board of Selectmen voted to convey the right of first refusal to Mass Audubon, which had received a \$25 million donation to help it secure the property.

Mount Grace said, "The land is directly connected to another 1,500 acres that are already protected, creating a contiguous forest corridor that reaches past Lake Monomaniac to connect with protected lands in New Hampshire...the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program considers two-thirds of these woods to be among the most critical land in Massachusetts for sustaining wildlife and biodiversity."

2. PUBLIC HEARINGS: There was no scheduled public hearings this evening.

3. APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS:

4.1 Updated Vacancy List of Boards/Committees- Chair Ward read the updated list of vacancies on Boards and Committees and explained the duties. If interested in joining the Communication Committee contact Debra Dennis in the Town Managers office or email him. Cultural Council 11 vacancies – read what they do. Communications Committee 2 vacancies, Cultural Council 11 vacancies, Fence Viewer/Field Driver 1 vacancy, Historical District Commission 2 alternate vacancies, MPIC 1 Vacancy, and ZBA 1 alternate vacancy. Capital Planning Committee-resident member vacancy.

4.2 Resignation-Jill Sackett-Master Plan Implementation Committee- Chair Ward said Jill Sackett does a lot for this town. Selectman Beauvais thanked Jill for all her contributions. **Selectman Beauvais moved to accept the resignation of Jill Sackett from the Master Plan Implementation Committee and thank her for her service. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded.** Vote: All aye.

4. PERMIT/LICENSE APPLICATIONS:

5.1 Change of Manager-American Legion Post 193-Kathleen Blacquiere- Selectman Beauvais read the notice-The Winchendon Board of Selectmen acting as the Local Licensing Authority, will hold a public meeting in the 2nd floor auditorium of Town Hall, 109 Front Street on Tuesday, November 12, 2024, beginning at 6:30pm on the petition of The American Legion Post 193, 295 School Street on the application of Change of Manager.

Selectman Beauvais moved Acting as the local licensing authority to approve the Manager Change for American Legion Post 193 to Kathleen Blacquiere. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Vote: All aye.

5.2 Special One Day Liquor License- Winchendon CAC -Murder Mystery Dinner at Senior Center-11/23/2024- Brian Croteau explained the event. We have 50 character spots. We need to figure out the math but hopefully between 50-70. The cost of the tickets goes directly to Park & Recreation. **Selectman Beauvais moved to approve the Special One Day Wine and Malt Liquor License for Brian Croteau for the Murder Mystery Dinner at the Senior Center on November 23, 2024 from 5pm-10pm and waive the fee.** Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Vote: All aye.

5.3 Special One Day Liquor License-Winchendon CAC-Snowball Dinner at the Senior Center-12/14/2024- The applicant withdrew this application.

5.4 Common Victualer License-Winchendon CAC-5 Summer Drive-Selectman Beauvais moved to approve the Common Victualer License for the Winchendon CAC at 5 Summer Drive and hold the license and waive the fee. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Vote: All aye.

5. BOARDS/COMMITTEES/COMMISSIONS:-

6.1 Presentation Digital Equity Plan-Tracy Murphy MRPC-This was tabled until the next meeting.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

7.1 Robinson Broadhurst-List of Projects-Town Manager, William McKinney went over the draft proposed 2025 Robinson Broadhurst Foundation Grant Requests. Chair Ward asked about the drone project and the roadside mower. Brian Croteau explained the drone project and the mower request. Chair Ward asked about structural repairs at the Amphitheater. Shaina Cunningham came forward. She explained this is in terms of the barn. Brian Croteau said this would be a multiple year phase. Chair Ward spoke about the Clyde repairs. Selectman Beauvais asked Brian Croteau about the digital electronic signage at Grout Park. Brian Croteau said it is at the intersection of Spring Street and Glenallen Street triangle not exactly at Grout Park. It would be double sided and have multiple messages.

7. OLD BUSINESS: There was no old business this evening.

8. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT: Mr. McKinney said he attended the Veterans Day events at the Veterans Cemetery and the American Legion. On Election Day there was a great turnout. He said it was great to meet some of the residents.

9. TOWN MANAGER FINANCIAL UPDATE: The Town Manager went over the FY23 Findings Progress Report spreadsheet dated November 12, 2024. He highlighted changes from the last one. Chair Ward said he took the audit report very seriously. He commented by the next audit we will have this cleared up and on track.

11. MINUTES:

11.1 October 28, 2024 Regular Meeting-Selectman Beauvais moved to approve as presented this evening. Chair Ward seconded. Vote: Selectwoman Blanchard abstained, Selectwoman LaBrie aye, Selectman Beauvais aye, and Chair Ward aye.

12. COMMUNICATIONS: Chair Ward said the next meeting is November 25th at 6:30pm. He said all board members have received notification about the MMA annual meeting and trade show. Let Debra Dennis know if you will be going.

13. AGENDA ITEMS: There was no further agenda items.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION: There are no scheduled executive sessions this evening.

15. ADJOURNMENT: Selectman Beauvais moved to adjourn. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Vote: All aye.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:06pm.

Respectfully submitted

Debra Dennis
Debra Dennis
Executive Assistant